DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 248 165 SO 015 853

AUTHOR Christesen, Barbara
TITLE The Martian Chronicles. A Sound Filmstrip Program. Study Guide.
REPORT NO MB-5545
PUB DATE 83
NOTE 13p.; Photographs may not reproduce clearly.
AVAILABLE FROM Media Basics, Inc., Larchmont Plaza, Larchmont, NY 10538 (sound filmstrip kit, $116.50; study guide only, $1.00).
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Conservation (Environment); Creative Writing; *Cultural Pluralism; Expository Writing; Filmstrips; Futures (of Society); *Interdisciplinary Approach; Learning Activities; Multimedia Instruction; *Science Fiction; Secondary Education; *Social Studies; *United States Literature; Units of Study
IDENTIFIERS Bradbury (Ray); *Martian Chronicles

ABSTRACT

This filmstrip study guide dramatizes several stories from Ray Bradbury's "The Martian Chronicles" concerning basic issues of human nature: the need to respect cultural differences and the importance of preserving the environment. A collection of 26 short stories, "The Martian Chronicles" describes the colonization of Mars. The personal and political behavior of the colonizers is examined against the imaginative backdrop of a distant planet. The three filmstrips provided in the programs deal with "The Expeditions," "The Settlers," and "The Maritians." For each filmstrip the guide provides a synopsis, activities to use with students before viewing the filmstrip, a list of new vocabulary words, and themes to explore. Unit activities provided include questions for discussion, ideas for creative and expository writing, themes for further investigation, and ways for comparing the book and filmstrip program. The guide concludes with a brief bibliography listing other works by Bradbury, other science fiction, and related non-fiction. (RM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

The MARTIAN CHRONICLES

OBJECTIVES

1. To introduce readers to the works of Ray Bradbury, a master of the science fiction genre.
2. To appreciate the classic elements of modern science fiction as a vital form of contemporary literature.
3. To examine the basic issues of human behavior, cultural pluralism, and the impact of science and technology on society and its values.
4. To present an imaginative case study on futurism and the threat of nuclear destruction.

THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES: Book and Filmstrip Program

Ray Bradbury's science fiction classic describes the future history of the colonization of Mars. Bradbury explores the personal and political behavior of the colonizers against the imaginative backdrop of a distant planet. Adapted from the new six hour television production, this program dramatizes several Bradbury stories concerning basic issues affecting human nature; the need to respect cultural differences; and the importance of preserving the environment.

THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES

A SOUND FILMSTRIP PROGRAM

Teaching Objectives 2
Commentary by the Program Advisor 3
Filmstrip 1 – The Expeditions 4-5
Filmstrip 2 – The Settlers 6-7
Filmstrip 3 – The Martians 8-9
Unit Activities 10
Bibliography 11

Guide Writer: Barbara Christesen Editor: Martha Gamerman

Copyright © 1983 by Media Basics, Inc., Larchmont, New York 10538
All Rights Reserved

About THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES

From its early 19th century roots in speculative literature, through the fantasies of H. G. Wells, Jules Verne, and Edgar Rice Burroughs into the pulps of *Weird Tales* and the slicks of *Colliers*, to its tremendous popular appeal among contemporary young paperback readers, Science Fiction has been a genre struggling for literary respectability. Critics have disagreed not only on its literary value, but upon a definition of the genre itself. Some suggest that Science Fiction is rightly a branch of children's literature, a futuristic extension of fantasy and fairy tales. Others suggest that Science Fiction is more closely associated with writings of philosophers and theologians because as a genre it is heavily value laden, frequently exploring contemporary moral and social issues in futuristic societies and settings. More recently, Science Fiction has explored the impact of science on society and the use of technology to destroy the human spirit.

Amidst this literary controversy stands Ray Bradbury, a writer with a singular reputation for the use of metaphor in imaginative fiction. He has been labeled a moralist, a preacher, a science fiction writer, a fantasy writer, a poet of prose, a short story writer with the power of an Edgar Allan Poe or a Shirley Jackson. He has been called the legitimizer of Science Fiction by some and a hopeless romantic whose science is inaccurate by others. He doesn't fly in airplanes or even drive automobiles in protest against machines. Whatever Science Fiction is or may become as a genre and whoever Bradbury is as a person and writer, there can be little disagreement about the immense popularity and resiliency of his works. Since his earliest stories (in the 1940's) his works have remained in print for three decades. His stories have been anthologized in over 300 different collections. *Fahrenheit 451*, *Something Wicked This Way Comes*, and *The Martian Chronicles* have all been developed into cinematic scripts.

The Martian Chronicles (1950), the turning point in his career, is perhaps the best example of Bradbury the poet and Bradbury the moralist. *The Martian Chronicles* is essentially a collection of twenty-six short stories linked by bridge passages. The book is disjointed and episodic in structure, but it is far more than the sum of its parts. Not a collection of short stories and not a novel, it is more an elaborate scrapbook complete with word pictures and memorabilia. Essentially, Bradbury is retelling the story of an American frontier and the excesses of the colonizers right down to the Indian massacres. His prose style is lyrical and poet-like frequently exposing a musical quality. He is given to traditional poetic devices: repeated stress patterns, alliteration and internal rhyme.

His Mars becomes a futuristic setting to explore the past. Rich in metaphor and sensitive description, *The Martian Chronicles* is the poet's vehicle for raising his voice against the mechanization of mankind. As Clifton Fadiman suggests, "Bradbury is telling us that human beings are still mental and moral children who cannot be trusted with the terrifying toys they have by some tragic accident invented." *The Martian Chronicles* is Bradbury's Hellfire and brimstone warning against the machine and its power to destroy human kind.

As Bradbury himself puts it, "Science Fiction is the most important fiction being written today. All of the important problems of our age are science fictional problems . . . Everything you can name that has gone wrong, or gone right with mankind in the last fifty years, was once a science fictional rosebud sprouting in some writer's head."

Dan Kirby
Associate Professor, English Education
University of Georgia

The MARTIAN CHRONICLES

FILMSTRIP 1 – THE EXPEDITIONS

Parallels Pages 1 - 72

SYNOPSIS:

The year is 1999 and the first manned expedition has been sent to Mars. When the crew lands they are met by a Martian whose wife's prophetic dreams have warned him of their arrival. The Martian is armed with a deadly weapon and eliminates the strange rivals for his wife's affections. The second expedition lands near a town exactly like the ones of their childhood. Each man is taken off to visit with relatives long dead on earth. When the last man has been killed, the Martians, who have the intuitive power to recreate what they see in the earthman's mind, resume their natural identity, and the illusion of the town fades away. The third expedition finds many Martian cities but no living Martians – all have died of chicken pox contracted from their encounter with the previous expeditions. Jeff Spender sees the beauty of the Martian cities and is repelled by the callous attitudes of the crew. He goes off alone to study the Martian civilization and returns with a plan to protect the planet from invasion. Captain Wilder is forced to shoot Spender and wonders if the seeds of violence have taken root on Mars.

BEFORE VIEWING:

1. Writers of science fiction have often foretold the future with surprising accuracy. What scientific discoveries and inventions first appeared as "fantasy" in science fiction? (submarines, space travel, cloning, etc.) How were these writers able to make such predictions? Consider science fiction stories you have read or seen on film and describe which modern predictions might become reality in the future.

2. Consider the possibility that there is another planet in the solar system capable of sustaining human life – and that it is possible to travel easily to this planet. Why might people want to go there? How might their presence affect the planet? Its inhabitants?

VOCABULARY:

chronicle	decimated	inexorably
psychosis	essence	alien
	telepathy	

FILMSTRIP 1 – THE EXPEDITIONS

"Is it possible that there are people on the Third Planet?"

EXPLORING THEMES:

1. Why do the Martians destroy the first two expeditions? How do they accomplish this? Are they justified in destroying the second expedition? Explain..

2. What special ability do the Martians possess which enables them to duplicate a town on earth and populate it with people whom the earth travelers knew? What other things can the Martians do with their special powers?

3. Although Martian civilization appears to be flourishing when the first two expeditions arrive, the third one encounters cities which have been dead "for a thousand years or more." How might this discrepancy be explained? What is the author saying about the relevance of time?

4. How do the members of the first two expeditions inadvertently cause the death of huge numbers of Martians? Epidemics have affected the history of many cultures on earth. What ancient civilizations have suffered the fate of the Martians?

5. What does Spender mean when he calls himself "the last Martian"? What secret of Martian life has he discovered? How does the Martian culture compare with Earth's? Are such profound differences between cultures plausible? Explain.

6. What is Captain Wilder's reaction to Spender's death? Why does Wilder fear for the future?

7. Do you think it is inevitable that the earthmen destroy the Martian culture? Why?

FILMSTRIP 2 – THE SETTLERS

Parallels Pages 72 - 141

SYNOPSIS:

It is 2004 and the settlers have arrived to build frontier towns on Mars. The Lustigs are awakened one night by the appearance of a boy who seems to be their long lost son. However, when they go into town with him he soon disappears. They do not know that he has changed identity by looking into the minds of other lonely people and becoming the person each one wants most to see. Pursued by a mob of desperate relatives, the boy collapses and dies. Only then do the townspeople understand that they have met their first Martian. All the settlers are ordered to return home as the United States faces the threat of a nuclear war. Sam Parkhill refuses to go. He is waiting for the star ships to land with hungry travelers who will turn his restaurant into a "gold mine." Only after the earth is destroyed in a nuclear holocaust does Parkhill begin to understand that the Martians who visited him want to live in peace with neighbors who can no longer go home.

BEFORE VIEWING:

1. This filmstrip opens with the following words:

   Within the rockets come men to beat the strange world into a shape that is familiar to the eye. They come in . . . to bludgeon away the strangeness.

   A. What changes do you think the settlers will make on Mars?

   B. Why do we need "to bludgeon away the strangeness" in a new environment?

   C. Describe examples of this phenomenon from our own history.

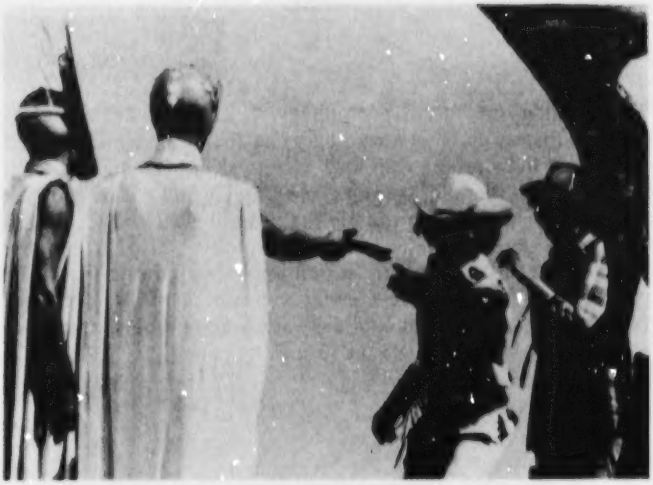
   D. If you were to go to a "new world" would you try to live in it as it is or make it like "home"? Explain.

2. Colonel Wilder, the central character of the filmstrip, is placed in charge of the Martian settlements. If you were in his position, what steps would you take to try to save the Martian civilization from total destruction?

VOCABULARY:

bludgeon	module	severed
inevitable	prophesying	badger
technocrat	perceive	discretion

FILMSTRIP 2 – THE SETTLERS



"We leave you now. Prepare. Tonight is the night. This land is yours."

EXPLORING THEMES:

1. Why do the Lustigs come to Mars? Who is the person who claims to be their son? Why does he appear outside their house at night?

2. What does the Martian do when he sings to the Lustigs in their sleep? How does this help them to accept him?

3. How does Parkhill react when he sees the Martian? Why is he terrified when more Martians appear? What do they give him? Why have the Martians chosen Parkhill, of all people left on Mars, to receive their gift?

4. Why is Wilder given notice to evacuate all colonists from Mars? Why do Sam Parkhill and his wife refuse to leave? What event shatters their hopes? What is the comic irony in Parkhill's circumstances?

5. In the book Parkhill asks his wife, "Emma, why did they do it? Why didn't they kill me? Don't they know anything?" What do these questions reveal about Parkhill? How would Parkhill have behaved in the Martians' place? Why would he have behaved this way? What do we learn about the Martians from this episode?

The MARTIAN CHRONICLES

FILMSTRIP 3 – THE MARTIANS

SYNOPSIS:

Parallels Pages 174-181

Captain Wilder visits the remaining people on Mars who did not return to earth. Peter Hathaway has been waiting years to return home. To combat his loneliness he has built robots who look like his dead wife and daughter. When Wilder finally arrives, the old man dies. The Captain and Father Stone decide to leave the robots behind to live the life "they were created for". On his travels across the planet Captain Wilder meets a phantom – a Martian from another time – who shares the precepts of his philosophy with the earth man. Fortified with new insights, Wilder takes his family to live in an old Martian city to learn the Martian way of life. They look in the waters of the canal and see themselves, the "real" Martians who will shape the future.

BEFORE VIEWING:

1. Ray Bradbury has placed the following quotation at the beginning of *The Martian Chronicles:*

   "It is good to renew one's wonder," said the philosopher. "Space travel has again made children of us all."

   What does this passage mean? Why must we renew our wonder? What happens if we do not? How could space travel do this?

2. If you could visit a planet with an advanced civilization, what would you hope to find there? Would you be frightened of the planet's inhabitants? Why? Would you be frightened if they came to our planet? Why?

VOCABULARY:

debris	activate	figment	disenchanted
primitive	plague	despondent	unsullied

FILMSTRIP 3 – THE MARTIANS

"There they are. Those are the Martians."

EXPLORING THEMES:

1. Why are there only a handful of isolated humans remaining on Mars? Are they there of their own choice? Why?

2. How does Peter Hathaway manage to cope with his isolation? Who are the beings he introduces to Wilder as his wife and daughter? How does Wilder discover their secret?

3. How does Wilder interpret the Martians' gift to Parkhill of half of the planet? How does Parkhill's interpretation differ from Wilder's?

4. Describe Wilder's meeting with the Martian. Why does each one think the other is a ghost? How does this episode relate to Bradbury's theme of the relevance of time?

5. What is the Martian philosophy of life which the phantom explains to Wilder? How does it affect Wilder's point of view?

6. Why does Wilder burn his books and papers? Do you think he does the right thing? Why?

7. Who are the Martians that Wilder shows his family? Do you think his premise is a valid one? Why?

UNIT ACTIVITIES

I. FOR DISCUSSION

A. How are the past, present and future blended in this story? How do you interpret the Martian's speech to Wilder about the irrelevance of time? Why is this theme important to a science fiction writer? What is its importance for us?

B. Using your knowledge of *The Martian Chronicles*, list five values that you think are important to author Ray Bradbury. How does he seek to promote these values in his story?

C. How has Wilder changed from the beginning of the filmstrips to the end? How have his experiences affected his attitudes? What do you think his future life on Mars will be like?

D. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of space travel. Would you favor the colonization of another planet? Why?

II. FOR CREATIVE AND EXPOSITORY WRITING

A. Write a short story describing life on Mars after the story ends. Use specific details to capture the essence of life on Mars.

B. Write a letter from Wilder, Parkhill or Father Stone to a relative back on earth describing the difficulties of life on Mars and the writer's hopes for the future. Then write a response.

C. Write a scene between Ylla and Mr. K. one year after the first expedition. Include specific details of their Martian way of life.

D. Write an essay developing an idea discussed earlier: Must civilizations like the Martians' inevitably succumb to civilizations like ours? Consider why those civilizations die; whether they could co-exist; what each might provide for the other.

III. FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION

A. In a report to the class, explain what information scientists have obtained from unmanned spacecraft which have landed on Mars or photographed it from space. Does this information allow for any remote possibility of life on the planet? Explain.

B. Isaac Asimov is another important writer of science fiction. Read one of

Asimov's stories. Write an essay comparing him with Ray Bradbury in terms of theme, character, and writing style.

C. Read *The Dispossessed* by Ursula LeGuin or *Childhood's End* by Arthur C. Clarke. Compare one of these books with *The Martian Chronicles*. Discuss how each book treats the relationship between human beings and extraterrestrials; what moral values emerge from each story; what each author predicts for the future of our planet and the human race.

IV. COMPARING BOOK AND FILMSTRIP PROGRAM

A. Compare the importance of Colonel Wilder's role in the book and in the filmed version. In which does he play a more strategic part? What actions attributed to him in the filmed version are actually carried out by other characters in the book? Why do you think it was necessary to change Wilder's role for the film?

B. The book contains a number of short stories which were omitted from the filmed version. Choose one story that was omitted from the filmstrips. Write an essay explaining how the story contributes to the issues and themes already discussed.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Other Works by Ray Bradbury

The Illustrated Man
R Is for Rocket
I Sing the Body Electric!
Fahrenheit 451
Long After Midnight
S Is for Space
Mars and the Mind of Man, by Ray Bradbury and others

Other Science Fiction

Biggle, Lloyd, Jr. *A Galaxy of Strangers.*
Clarke, Arthur C. *Childhood's End.*
LeGuin, Ursula. *The Dispossessed.*
Silverberg, Robert. *Galactic Dreamers.*
Waugh, Charles. *Mysterious Visions.*
Weston, Peter. *Andromeda 1: An Original Science Fiction Anthology.*

Non-Fiction

Bergaust, Erik. *Colonizing Space.*
Cooper, Henry S. F., Jr. *The Search for Life on Mars.*
Haldeman, Joe. *Study War No More: A Selection of Alternatives.*
Moore, Patrick. *Guide to Mars.*
Shapley, Harlow. *The View from a Distant Star: Man's Future in the Universe.*
Sullivan, Walter. *We Are Not Alone.*

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Media Basics

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

FILMS INTO FILMSTRIPS

OUTSTANDING MOTION PICTURES AS SOUND FILMSTRIP PROGRAMS

HAMLET
THE HEART IS A LONELY HUNTER
ALICE IN WONDERLAND
AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE
THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES
THE LORD OF THE RINGS
THE BLACK STALLION
WATERSHIP DOWN
A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM
SEVEN ALONE
BORN FREE
JUDGMENT AT NUREMBERG
BIG MO
ALL THE PRESIDENT'S MEN
THE PEARL
ABE LINCOLN IN ILLINOIS
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE
PATHS OF GLORY
ANIMAL FARM
THE GREAT BRAIN
INHERIT THE WIND

OF MICE AND MEN
WUTHERING HEIGHTS
WHERE THE RED FERN GROWS
THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER
TOM SAWYER/HUCKLEBERRY FINN
CRIME AND PUNISHMENT
THE CALL OF THE WILD/THE SEA WOLF
LOUIS L'AMOUR'S AMERICAN WEST
THE RED PONY
EMIGRANTS/THE NEW LAND
CRY THE BELOVED COUNTRY
OTHELLO
THE ISLAND OF DR. MOREAU
MACBETH
THE MIRACLE WORKER
MOBY DICK
KIDNAPPED
MARTIN LUTHER KING
LORD OF THE FLIES
TRADE OFFS—ECONOMIC EDUCATION
THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

THE BEST OF NOVA / FRONTIERS OF CHANGE
THE BEST OF NOVA / A WORLD OF LANGUAGES

LARCHMONT PLAZA • LARCHMONT, NY 10538 • 914/834-2505